

Draft

Rockville Environment Commission Minutes of the Meeting of Thursday, March 7, 2013 Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue

Attendance

Commissioners Present: John Becker, Steve Cardon, Julie Palakovich Carr, Kris Dighe, Alicia Hosmer, Beri Kravitz, Devinie Lye (phone), Clark Reed and Lea Rosenbohm

Commissioners Absent: None

Guests: Mark Charles, Environmental Management

Cynthia Kebba, Community Planning and Development Services

F. Fred Samadani, Rockville Resident

Robert Johnson, Lockheed Martin, Pepco and Delmarva Power C&I Energy Savings Program representative

Isaac Rose, Rockville Resident and Boy Scout (working on Citizenship in the Community merit badge)

Jodi Rose, Rockville Resident

Meeting Commencement

The meeting convened at 7:30 pm by Chair Reed.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Dighe moved and Commissioner Carr seconded approval of the February 7, 2013 meeting minutes with no corrections. The motion passed 7-0-1 [Commissioner Lye did not participate in the meeting until later in the agenda; and having missed the previous meeting, Commissioner Kravitz abstained].

Pepco's Commercial and Industrial Energy Savings Program Briefing

Robert Johnson of Lockheed Martin has been hired by Pepco and Delmarva Power to implement a commercial and industrial energy savings program under the *Empower Maryland Act*. Pepco has millions in funding to pay for upgrades to buildings and equipment resulting in lower energy consumption and energy savings. The company will pay \$0.85 for every \$1 spent. The goal of the program is to make energy efficient construction and equipment as affordable as standard buildings (including insulation and windows) and equipment. The exception is payment for solar facilities which are not available. Water conservation funds are also available. The City is eligible for these funds and can apply by submitting an email request. The money must be allocated by December 14, 2013 and spent by December 2015.

Rockville Pike Redevelopment Plan

Cynthia Kebba, the City's project manager for the Rockville Pike redevelopment plan, briefed the Commission on the plan's status and the upcoming opportunities to comment. The Pike is the area of expected greatest growth in the City. Nearly 9,000 new residents and 4,500 new jobs are expected to come to the area by 2040. The initial draft plan was prepared by the City's

consultants in December 2010. There were two days of public hearings in 2011 and the comment period lasted from December 2010 through September 2011. The Planning Commission held over 20 work sessions in 2011 and 2012. As a result of this public involvement, Staff has revised the plan as follows:

- Creates smaller walkable blocks.
- Connect existing neighborhood streets with the Pike.
- Provide one acre of new parks on either side of the Pike.
- Moving parking to the rear or underneath buildings.
- There will be two-directional dedicated bike paths on both sides of the Pike.
- Buses will not be authorized in the local access road.
- The sidewalks will be widened.
- Buildings must put 70% of their frontage on the sidewalk (rather than set back).
- Light rail or bus rapid transit will travel in the middle of the Pike.
- Taller buildings are allowed near Metro Stations.

The revised plan was made public on March 1, 2013 (see www.rockvillemd.gov/rockvillespike) and the Planning Commission is now taking comment on this latest version. Another round of public hearings is scheduled for 7:00 pm on March 20, April 24 and May 22, 2013 in the Mayor and Council Chambers. The Environmental Commission is invited to review the revised plan and submit comments or testimony.

Commissioners Rosenbohm, Becker and Carr will review the Revised Plan and report back to the Commission.

Hometown Holidays Preparations

The Environmental Movie

- Commissioner Kravitz moved and Commissioner Dighe seconded a motion to show the film *Chasing Ice*, a recent academy award nominee during *Hometown Holidays*. The motion passed 8-0. The distributor indicates it is available for a \$500 rental. *Cape Spin* is a second choice with a rental fee of \$750.
- The Regal Theater has been contacted and will rent a screen to the Commission for \$1,950. This is cost prohibitive. The Commission would like to show the film in the Fitzgerald Theater on Friday, May 24 at 7:00 pm and in the Rockville Library on Saturday, May 25, at 2:30 and 4:00. Subsequent to the meeting, the Commission discovered that neither venue is going to work. Therefore, the Mayor and Council Chambers have been reserved for both Friday and Saturday.
- Commissioner Lye will develop a draft program announcement and send it to Mark Charles to transmit to Recreation and Parks for the Program. The deadline for getting *Hometown Holidays* information into the weekend program is March 15 (to Colleen McQuity of Recreation and Parks).

The Booth

- The booth will be staffed using three 1.5 hour shifts from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm on Saturday, May 25.
- Commissioner Becker has arranged for a vertical wind turbine and a solar collector to be present. The Commission booth will be located in front of Gordon Biersch on Middle Lane.
- Commissioner Rosenbohm is approaching local Lowes and Home Depot stores for rainbarrel donations to be used as raffle items.

Initiative to Encourage Recycling

Commissioner Carr discussed her research regarding neighborhood recycling rates. The King Farm and Lincoln Park neighborhoods are recycling significantly less than the rest of the City. The next step is to work with Environmental Management to develop a survey to both discover recycling obstacles in these neighborhoods and to serve as a teaching tool on the extent of recyclable items.

Communications Strategy and Facebook Page

The Commission currently has a LinkedIn Page but does not have a Facebook presence. The Commission believes a Facebook pages should be established where tips for residents and businesses can be posted, and community events can be advertised.

On March 5, Commissioners Dighe and Kravitz met with the Assistant City Manager Jenny Kimball and the Rockville Channel 11 Manager Bridget Broullire. The City agreed that the Commission could have its own Facebook page, however, there is a concern for inappropriate comments posted by third parties. The City needs to develop guidelines for all Boards and Commissions wanting to engage in social networking. These are expected to be completed in April. The Commissioners agreed to post something at least one per week throughout the year.

Multi-City Environmental Commissioners Meeting

The next meeting of the multi-City group of Environmental Boards and Commissions is scheduled for Thursday, April 18 in the Town of Chevy Chase. The meeting will be start at 7:00 at 4301 Willow Lane in the Jane Lawton Recreation Center. The Center is near the Bethesda Metro and offers plenty of parking. The Town will provide sandwiches, chips and drinks at 6:30 for those attending. Rockville will be represented by Commissioners Dighe, Cardon and Becker.

Environmental Management Staff Report

- Mark Charles reported on the successful Mayor and Council briefing on the Rock Creek Watershed Assessment conducted on February 25, 2013.
- Mr. Charles reported that March 23 is the annual *Earth Hour* celebration (8:30-9:30). A proclamation acknowledging this event will be taken up by the Mayor and Council on March 18. This year, the entire Civic Center Park will go dark. Commissioners are invited to attend the proclamation.
- Similarly, the Mayor and Council will receive a proclamation on April 1 regarding designating April as *Earth Month* and April 22, as *Earth Day*. Mr. Charles ran down a brief list of activities planned for the month.
- It was noted that there would be no Environmental Excellence Awards presented in April.
- A brief rundown of environmental Bills pending before the General Assembly was provided, including Rockville's position on each Bill.

- Finally, a status report of the Environmental Management physical move was provided. It now looks like the Division will move to 20 Courthouse Square rather than City Hall.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 by unanimous consensus.

Next Commission Meeting

The next Commission meeting is *tentatively* scheduled for **Thursday, April 4, 2013 at 7:30 pm** in the **Diamondback Conference Room** of the **Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland, 20850**. The public is invited to attend.